1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

845 787 Although the Monguors like to have large families, they have a divided attitude on the birth of twins. If the twins are of the same sex, it is a good omen, but twins of different sex are a very bad omen, foretelling the impoverishment of the family, the ending of good fortune, and the sterility of the mother.[24a] According to Shirokogoroff, both the Manchus and the Tungus consider twins dangerous. They are afraid of a woman who has had twins and will not have sexual relations with her. Although they believe that twins are so closely connected that if one dies the other must die, too, they bury them separately. The Tungus believe that twins have only one soul, and when a woman has had twins no one will borrow, buy, or accept a gift from either her or her husband, for fear of also having twins.[25]

844 Since a Monguor girl is usually married at about the age of eighteen, she usually has her first child at the age of nineteen. It is rare for a girl as young as fifteen to have a child. The rule among the Monguors is to build the kitchen in the northeast corner of the courtyard. This is also the corner that is considered most propitious for a newly married couple. A woman who already has as many children as she wants will try to move out of the northeast corner and live in another room. Monguor women bear their children lying in a horizontal position, while Chinese women of the same region give birth in a kneeling position. At the time of childbirth most of the women of the village come to offer their help. There is always one of them who has a special reputation for dexterity, and she is invited specially. The Monguors prefer to have widows assisting at childbirth, because they believe that in the presence of a widow childbirth goes more smoothly and is more painless. If the delivery is difficult and seems to be taking too long, the husband climbs up on the roof and stamps furiously just above the head of the woman in labor. If this is not successful, a shaman is invited to drive away the evil spirits who are impeding the delivery, or a lama is called in to pray. Children born in such circumstances are often promised to a monastery to become lamas. As soon as the child has been born the room is tabu and men are no longer allowed to enter it. Over the entrance to the room the Monguors hang a cypress bough or a ball of wool or sometimes, in the Chinese manner, a piece of red cotton or a sieve.

845

[24a] The second born of twins has precedence over the first born. This belief has important consequences, because if the first born sons of an eldest son are twins, it is the second born of the twins who is entitled to hold, in due course, the office of head of the family. If the first born sons of a T'u-ssu are twins, it is the second who has the right of succession. The explanation given by the Monguors is that the first born twin is the servant of the second, because a man of importance is always accompanied by a servant, who respectfully opens the door for his master.

[25] S. M. Shirokogoroff, *Social organization of the Manchus*, as cited, 114, and *Social organization of the northern Tungus*, as cited, 275.

[p. 100a]

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588 A. To a prayer pole, a tree, a wall, a lion of baked clay, etc.

B. Marriages to a belt

Let us note that the marriages in the first series are also practiced by the Tibetans of Kansu, who live in a seminomadic and semiagrarian state; they are not found among the Chinese of the region.

A. Marriages to a Prayer Pole, etc.

114 Let us first put forth the case, then let us justify the classification of this practice in the series of marriages.

One can read in the books which speak of the T'ou-jen that this people includes girls, unmarried all their lives, who, however, bear children just the same. The Chinese books especially try to disparage this people particularly because of this custom. Now, they are mistaken. These superficial observers have understood nothing about the customs of these regions. It is not by this custom that the morality of the T'ou-jen must be judged.

844 To be able to bear a child honestly (for there is an honesty also [302 among these peoples), custom /127/ requires, without any exception 554] whatever, that the mother wear her hair in the style of married women; in other words, this is to say that it is necessary to be married to be able to become a mother.

Now it happens that girls not yet given in marriage are pregnant. 848 Two solutions then present themselves: the first is to bring on an [847] abortion or to wait until the child is born to make it disappear or to offer it to anyone who wants it; the second is to change the hair style of the girl, that is to say, to get her married.

588 When the second solution is adopted, they invite three or four [848] neighbors, who with the family are present at the "marriage." They have been careful to prepare the attire of the bride. She arrays herself with it and has her hair done in the style of married women. Two lamps are lighted, and the sacred fire placed in the middle of the courtyard is maintained by means of cypress branches. After spreading out pieces of red felt, they proceed to the marriage, which

/157 cont'd/

Ma 574 593

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., pp. 90-91: The second long visit of the newly married wife in her mother's house may be also understood as a survival of the customs that prescribed to the newly married wife to keep her place in her mother's house. Furthermore the Manchus never say "the wife's father's clan" but "the wife's mother's clan." At the same time they say " he husband's clan" and "the husband's father's clan." Thus all these facts cannot be explained without a supposition of the materline clan system in the past. /Cited in English./

Mo 562 421 593 574 her finest clothes, her ornaments, her jewels, and everything that is dear to her. One keeps one's treasures at one's home; now, the home of the daughter-in-law does not seem to be near her husband. This last custom, which still effectively recognizes that the wife today has certain property rights, does not belong to a patriarchal organization; furthermore, we saw in the speech of the master of ceremonies that formerly the daughter enjoyed property tights since in her own family she inherited half of a son's share.

Mo 527 844 e) Festivities at the birth of daughters.

We shall describe elsewhere the extraordinary noisy festivities in which the whole village takes part, given on the occasion of the birth of the first child of a daughter-in-law, whether this child be a son or daughter, the celebration is equally solemn. Now such a festivity upon the birth of a daughter is again absolutely abnormal in a patriarchal system, where only the male descendant counts. We must note that already in many T'ou-jen families this festivity is celebrated only upon the birth of the first son. This celebration is absolutely inconceivable to a Chinese mind.

Mo [171]

Mo 585 562 f) Wedding dinner at the bride's home.

In a patriarchal system how does one justify the dinner given at the bride's home for the members of her family alone on the eve of

[623 cont.]

852
171

[Note on foreign text pp. 624-625 cont.] down again and grasped a seal. She then no longer paid any attention to the things that lay before her. And now the result: this girl became chancellor of an imperial realm." -- The oracle at this birthday celebration corresponds essentially with that of the Tujen.

527

The Tujen celebrate birthdays otherwise, too, both men and women, but only from the forty-fifth year on. A feast is held, at which all the relatives take part. As presents, nine loaves of bread are customary. Eight steamed loaves signify the eight genii, pa-hsien, and one loaf represents the god of age, shou-hsing (star of age). Towards sundown, all go outside to the graves and give the ancestral offering. Then they go home and drink and dance into the night. -- As the names show, this custom is also borrowed from the Chinese. The Tujen originally had no ancestral offering; to the Chinese, on the other hand, the arrow of good fortune and the dance with song are foreign.

[769]

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[769]

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Word List

[844] To give birth: tōrō-.
[527] Birthday: tōrōdzāŋ udur; or contracted, tōrōdzūdur.
To celebrate the birthday: tōrōdzūdur noġdzi-.
That woman has given birth: nie bieri tōrōdzia.
When were you born? tsini kidzie tōrōwa?
Yes, I am really celebrating: noġdzidza ligunadzi.

Buddhas. The special *swork'a* or prayer honoring his deity is read by the lamas, and the Kurtain is proclaimed to be a genuinely possessed man. Then he is ordered to memorize his *swork'a* and to recite it before each performance, it being an invitation to his deity to descend into him. 756 787

Then follow the usual recommendations given to all Kurtains about continence on the day of a performance, not to act when his wife is giving birth and at mourning time, not to indulge in wine, to keep his weapons (sword, whip, and dagger) in a decent place and not to use them for other purposes; to give a performance at the monastery at the annual pageant time and in the families where his deity is specially honored, and always stress is put on the obligation to be loyal, honest, and dependable, so as not to cast a blight on the institution. Every time I heard this last recommendation, I remembered what the Monguors had said so many times, that among the Kurtains more dubious fellows are encountered than among the shamans, and for that reason the shamans are invited more by them than the Kurtains. They always added the story of the famous Kurtain of Toolong, which was seared in their mind. It seems really typical and sheds an unfavorable light on the institution. [944]

Many years ago, the Kurtain of Toolong used to predict whether there would be outbreaks of arson in autumn when the crops were heaped upon the threshing floor. In this way he earned a pretty good living, because the crops of the people who had invited him for the performance of his rites were preserved and those of the incredulous people were burned at night. The whole country was really disturbed. However, suspicions arose and the arsonist was taken redhanded one night. He turned out to be the old father of the Kurtain. The chief and the elders of the village hung the old man by his thumbs from a tree and he received a well-deserved lashing to make him reveal the instigator of the arson. Reeling with dizziness and pain, welts and bruises all over his body, the father accused his son, and the Kurtain was hung up and tortured. The infuriated villagers came within a hair of killing him. His mandate of disciple of the spirit was gone forever. Such events are very prejudicial to the Kurtains. They cast a blemish on their group and are commented on all over the country for years, and so the saying goes that there are few good genuine Kurtains, and for that reason all have to be tested.[2] 756 685 [627]

Some of the Kurtains not only upset the villagers once in a while, but even land the monasteries in serious trouble. A fact well known in the country runs, that on the fifteenth of the first moon in 1914, the lamas of the important lamasery of Seerkok invited their Kurtain, possessed by the deity Kortong, to the ceremony carried out in honor of the deity, with great pomp and display. 756 579

[2] DeGroot, *op. cit.*, 1238, notes a similar case of a Wu arsonist.

[p. 93(A)]